

Questions on website pertinent to 4K:

Who is eligible to attend 5K programs?

Kindergarten for five year olds is provided for all children in South Carolina who are five years of age on or before September 1 of the attendance year. If a district chooses to allow children younger than the legislated attendance age, the Office of Early Childhood Education recommends that the district provide documentation that every five year old child is being served. If children younger than five years of age attend, no state funding will follow those children to the district. Attendance is mandatory and compulsory for five year olds. However, there is an allowance that parents may sign a waiver and not send their child(ren) to kindergarten. Less than 1% of parents use the wavier option. Home schooling and private schools are legal ways of providing kindergarten service, however all procedures relative to home schooling must be met. If a waiver is sought by the parent(s), the Office of Early Childhood Education recommends that the district require the parent to sign a legally drawn document, stating that they do not hold the district accountable if the child proves unready for success in first grade.

How old does a child have to be to attend?

5, on or before September 1

What curriculum is used?

[Click Here](#)

How many children can be served in a classroom?

State regulation still allows up to 30 children to be served in one classroom. However, the Office of Early Childhood Education recommends that class size never exceed 24 children.

What is the adult child ratio?

30: 2 adults. The Office of Early Childhood Education recommends that class ratio be 24 children to 2 adults; a fully certified early childhood teacher and a properly prepared teaching assistant. An AA degree in child growth and development is recommended by the Office of Early Childhood Education, however state regulations do not require preparation higher than a high school diploma unless the class or school is Title I. In that case, an AA degree or passing a state required examination is required of the teaching assistant.

What education does the assistant need?

According to NCLB, she must have an AA degree in early childhood education or have passed a state test. For programs not receiving federal funds, state regulations require only high school graduation. However, many districts are requiring the AA degree in early childhood education.

What size is the classroom?

35 square feet per child

What size is the playground?

75 square feet per child

Who inspects the programs?

The fire marshal inspects for safety and the Health Department visits programs to inspect for health practices. The Office of Early Childhood Education and other offices at the SDE inspect the programs for quality assurance.

How are children assessed?

The OECE recommends that children be assessed only with South Carolina Readiness Assessment.

What can be purchased with EIA funding for 5K programs or with the new funding under Proviso 1.75?

Visit the website for the Office of Finance and examine the current funding manual.

What materials should be used in the classrooms?

[Click Here](#)

What other services do children receive?

A health screening if there seems to be a need for it, referral for more “in depth” assessment if there is a developmental need, transportation to the program and back home, and lunch and breakfast each day and a snack.

How do I know that the programs are good and that my child is getting what she needs to be prepared for kindergarten?

The Study of Kindergarten Programs, completed in 2001 is a good state study of the programs. Children are tracked to 3rd grade and beyond to see how they do on the state assessment system, PACT. SCRA scores are available to see children’s individual progress.

What connections will parents have to the program?

There should be 4 parent conferences per year with at least two being in settings other than the school. The Office of Early Childhood Education recommends that these “two in other settings” be done in the home, if at all possible. Parent involvement is a part of every good kindergarten program.

How do teachers receive professional development?

The Office of Early Childhood Education offers annual training on various current topics. There are 4 conferences in the state that offer training: SCAEYC, SCECA, Head Start and the Child Care Association. Staff from OECE participates in each of these conferences. The OECE also provides training to administrators and early childhood coordinators with the expectation that through the “train the trainer” approach that the training will be delivered back home in the local district. College and university early childhood staff are provided information and training. It is advised that districts provide information to the Office of Early Childhood Education before purchasing expensive training consultant contracts to ensure that the topics and strategies provided are aligned to state standards, regulations and policies. Reading First schools also receive professional development related to research on early reading instruction.